



# Lake County Coastal Plan Committee Minutes

## September 9, 2015

The Lake County Coastal Plan Committee hereby finds and determines that all formal actions were taken in an open meeting of the Lake County Coastal Plan Committee and that all the deliberations of the Planning Commission and its committees, if any, which resulted in formal actions, were taken in meetings open to the public in full compliance with applicable legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Chairman Boyd called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Lake County Planning and Community Development Office conference room in Painesville, Ohio.

### ATTENDANCE

The following members were present: Messrs. Allen, Buescher, Bruckman, Cain, Gilmer, Klco, Landeg, Manross, Martin, Reichard, Scruggs (alt. for Cardina), Stephenson, Webster, Welch, Zahirsky, Zeitz and Mmes. Elmer, Neale, and Salkiewicz (alt. for Landeg). Staff present: Mr. Boyd and Ms. Myers.

Mr. Boyd introduced Tracy Salkiewicz from the Lake County Engineer's Office. She will be sitting in future meetings for Chief Deputy Engineer, Bruce Landeg in the Fall. Mr. Landeg stated she will be appointed as Acting Chief Deputy. Ms. Kathie Pohl, Economic Development Director at Fairport Harbor was present and spoke on the Tall Ships program for Fairport Harbor.

### MINUTES

Mr. Stephenson moved to approve the February 26, 2014 minutes as submitted and Mr. Welch seconded the motion.

All voted "Aye".

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Coastal Plans Updates

Mr. Zahirsky of the Port Authority talked about what he has been working on in Fairport Harbor, where the Port is with Mentor Harbor and the Yacht Club in the City of Mentor, and progress made with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

- Mentor Harbor – In 2009, the channel of the Harbor was leased to the County Port Authority for the purpose of the Port securing Federal funding to rehabilitate it. They got through the first phase of the Corps process, which is to secure a determination of Federal interest in the project. The Corps does a basic study, looks at the economics, environmental impact, etc. They did find a Federal interest so that qualified this to move to the next step. An outreach campaign was organized to some of the elected officials at the Federal level, who put some pressure on the Corps and that moved forward.

They are now in the beginnings of the feasibility study phase where the Corps looks at actual design and engineering, does a much deeper economic impact study, and then looks to an environmental impact study. Typically the feasibility study stage takes about three years. The estimated cost the Corps has provided is \$750,000. The Corps pays for the first \$100,000 and the non-Federal sponsor, which in this case is the Port Authority, is responsible for 50% of the costs above that. The Lake County Port Authority will have to find \$325,000 to move this study

forward. They are talking to some of the stakeholders in the project to see what they can do. They are looking to the State to find out what assistance they could get from them which might be a bit of a conflict. If they get through the feasibility stage and the Corps looks at the project and finds merit in it, it will move to the construction phase. Here they would be responsible for securing 25% of the total cost of construction. The determination of the Federal interest and their preliminary plans are envisioned to be in the neighborhood of \$3 million.

- Fairport Harbor – The first project undertaken to get the Coastal Plan going was a bike route around Fairport Harbor. The Plan envisioned a network of bike routes along the lakefront connecting all the different communities. The Port figured Fairport Harbor would be well suited for this use and is centrally located. They raised \$25,500 and have been moving forward with the project. It is a shared bike route that has been painted on the roads around Fairport Harbor. Road signs that were generously donated by the Avery Denison Company will be installed. A working stand and air pump will be available for public use under a canopy shelter with bike racks in the downtown area of Fairport Harbor. They are now working on getting everything installed.

The bigger waterfront project is the waterfront hotel with a potential indoor water park. The Coastal Plans envisioned Fairport Harbor as seeing some of the most significant physical development on the landside. Fairport wanted to do something that would be a year-around attraction. The Visitor's Bureau did a feasibility study with the Port's help. They were able to use that to look at the feasibility of having such a hotel use in Fairport Harbor with positive results. The nearest competitors are Erie, PA and Sandusky, OH. There are one hour and two hour drive times to both of those locations. Within one or two hours of Fairport Harbor, there is actually a higher median income, higher buying power and higher populations than in the other two. They are well situated to have a competitive use like that.

To move the process along, the County Port Authority worked with the Village and the Fairport Harbor Port Authority, who also owns some of the land by the waterfront, to enter into ground leases so they now have the option on ground leases for that property and can sublease to a developer if one is found. Basically, the Port Authority acts as the project manager or project representative on behalf of the Village. The Village has final say on who the developer is, what the plan looks like and everything else. If it gets to the point where the Village is not comfortable with what has been brought to the table, the Port will start over again. That cannot be emphasized enough. They put out a request for qualifications through local media and direct mailing to some developers they knew had experience in that arena. The top two most qualified submissions were chosen and have made public presentations to the Village. They have been working through a selection process with those developers trying to get as much information and detail as possible for the Village, which is represented by a Waterfront Advisory Board. As this continues to progress, Mr. Zahirsky will keep this Committee informed.

Mayor Manross said the Waterfront Advisory Board consists of two members of the public, two members of the Fairport Harbor Port Authority and two members of the Village Council. They are subject to Sunshine Laws for an open meeting. They want to be very upfront and open with what this development is and do not want to find a large opposition at the end. They want this to be a game changer for not only Fairport Harbor, but for Lake County. There is very good interaction going on in the Village internally and with what the County is doing. If any one in this room has any questions, direct them through Mr. Zahirsky or Mr. Rantala at the County Port or to the Village. There are probably a lot of rumors out there and he suggested members should get the facts.

Ms. Elmer of CRWP said they had been working with the Eastlake Port Authority and the County Port Authority. The County Port, together with the City of Eastlake and several other partners, has been

looking at funding sources to help facilitate some locations in the park plan. The community had expressed some concerns regarding who would maintain any amenities that would be developed through the park plan, although very much in support of seeing that become a reality. There were also some limitations in terms of being able to raise the required local matching funds for some of the State grant sources that were available in the last year. Western Reserve Land Conservancy was brought in and Lake Metroparks was also invited to try to put that plan into the context of other community needs where they would score more management and other opportunities related to water front, land conservation and/or economic development to see if we could put together more of a corridor plan.

Mr. Boyd suggested State Capital Improvement Budget funding be considered by the agencies and communities of the Coastal Plan Committee members. The Committee was able to secure funds in 2009 of \$1.25 million to help with Madison, Perry, Mentor and Eastlake improvements through the County Port. He had already heard from one State representative who is looking for capital, shovel-ready projects in Lake County. Even though application is a year out, we could start to get these in to funnel them together onto one piece of letterhead to get more leverage as we did in 2009.

#### Questions and Concerns Regarding Emailed Reports of 2/17/15 & 5/20/15

The Chair asked the members if they had any questions on the information that had been emailed in place of the last two meetings. There were no questions or comments.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### Algae Blooms Roundtable

Mr. Boyd said there was a roundtable on the algae bloom situation in the western basin. These blooms have not surfaced in the daily testing of our two County water intakes at this time.

Mr. Allen suggested the State should have the Ohio E.P.A. and Division of ODNR form an entity to address this issue. To date, a lot of education has been done on best practices done voluntarily through the farming community and municipalities, etc. At the end of the day, it is not working. With enough urging, the Lake Erie Commission is re-establishing its Charter and has a mission to work on this problem. It will be costly, but consider the repercussions. The economic impact this is having on the charter boat captains on the Islands, etc., is unbelievable. With a \$10.7 billion Lake Erie related tourist industry, a \$1 billion water treatment facility does not seem like such an expensive proposition. There are three colleges doing a lot of research on this.

Other statements made by members at the meeting were:

- Lake County Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting is next Monday on September 14, 2015
- Last year, the Island water quality was an issue.
- Arcola Creek has been impacted for many years from the nursery people with herbicides, insecticides and fertilizers. There has been some planning to alleviate some of that.
- A Wall Street article not too long ago stated that 99% of the corn that is grown in western Ohio is used for fuel that is not needed any more. ODNR is now focused on this problem and a bill may become forthcoming.

Mr. Boyd again reminded community members to take the time to put together and submit their shovel-ready projects to be presented jointly for more leverage on Capital Budget dollars.

#### Community Updates:

Eastlake Resident – Bob Zeitz- He has been working at the Mentor Marsh and they have received three big grants to manage phragmites. They scheduled helicopter spraying and have a private operator bringing

in a Marsh Master to trample it down after killing it. They also have an English-made harvesting vehicle coming from Chicago in October.

Mr. Boyd stated that there is a major sanitary sewer line that runs through the Marsh to the plant. They are getting close to finalizing that design. They have been working with the Cleveland Museum to try to incorporate what is a very difficult engineering solution in that environment to address some water flow issues, etc. The time schedule is pretty close to being set.

County Engineer – Bruce Landeg – They received their first ever 319 Grant through the E.P.A. with Kristen from Chagrin River Watershed Partners. In 1958 when ODOT created that interchange at the north end of Morley Road, they raised Morley Road 15 feet. That made the pond there a Class III dam. ODOT was put on the hook for the cost of draining that dam and putting in a new culvert so it would not back up the water. Those dollars (\$.5 million) were used as a local share to get the 319 Grant. They could only do that because these were maintenance dollars, not Federal. They then got the stream restoration, which is a water quality issue because all those streams eventually flow into Lake Erie. The Department is now applying for a second 319 Grant relative to removing the dam head on the Painesville City area of Grand River. Working with Chagrin River Watershed Partners has been very helpful.

Eastlake Port Authority – Mark Cain – They have been reviewing their very antiquated zoning code and will possibly make some changes along the River and throughout the whole City. Everything has to go to public ballot. They are trying to get some economic development going. Businesses wanting to come in have not been able to do anything.

County Engineer- Traci Salkiewicz – She did not have anything to add to what Bruce Landeg said.

Fairport Harbor – Mayor Manross & Kathy Pohl – Some of our capital needs will be developed with the County Port as the hotel issue develops. The Mayor was sure there would be some infrastructure work on Water Street that needed to be done. He thought the lighthouse could be a capital item. That is a historical site in need of being fixed.

There is a chance to bring in some Tall Ships to the Fairport Harbor next year. It will be very expensive, but if this is done in 2016, they could have them for 2019 as well. This opportunity has been made available because of the RNC coming to Cleveland and Cleveland not taking on any more events. We had one ship this year, but this will be five ships. Kathy Pohl said there was up to seven identified already from Spain, Rhode Island, Maryland, Toronto, Erie, Norway, Florida, New Hampshire and Wisconsin. People could do a day sail on a couple ships, but the vast majority would be the step-on tours. This would be Ohio's only visit on the map. They would make it into Fairport from Toronto on July 7th through the 10<sup>th</sup>, a four-day event, before they go onto Bay City, Michigan, Chicago, Wisconsin and Minnesota and return to the east again. Tall Ships America has commitments from four ships right now. We would be looking at a commitment of \$50,000 in seed money. The budget would probably be around \$300,000 and we would need about 200 volunteers. Please forward any recommendations you have or if you want to be involved, contact us. Cleveland information shows past attendance has been in the 10's of thousands. They project an economic impact of \$2.5 million based on the results of port cities of similar size. It is an overwhelming task and they cannot do it alone.

Mr. Bruckman stated the Mentor Beach Fest is generally the last Saturday in July, but as part of our discussions relative to the RNC, we are going to move it up a week. That does suggest there might be a marketing opportunity for Lake County worth discussing. These events tend to amplify each other. They are going to need the "beds and heads" in Lake County. These folks would probably want winery tours and things of that nature too.

Mr. Boyd asked both of them to send an email to Ann Myers or him that would be blasted out to the members and they agreed to do that.

North Perry Village/ Lake County Development – Larry Reichard – The dredging for the marina is down this year. We are also getting closer to a final solution in working with the engineers from Massachusetts. They are creating a new model and we just approved the funds to move into that.

City of Mentor – Abe Bruckman – This is the third year they had done the Beach Fest. There were over 9,100 cars. Using our surveys, we had well over 27,000 people at the Headlands Beach State Park for a one-day event. The Fest brought people from 31 different zip codes and generated over \$100,000 in the economy. All that said, Beach Fest also has some challenges. One of which we now understand was that there were actually more cars than the site can logistically, easily accommodate. We do not have a solution for that as yet.

These were all interesting portents and signals relative to a future hotel in Fairport Harbor. He could see a scenario of people coming and spending the night there and attending the Beach Fest or Tall Ships. Related to that, there is a Central Lake County Coastal Trailway Planning project, which will hopefully provide some positive feedback relative to connecting all these different hotels. The next step in that project will be a presentation of a way-finding and signage program that we can all share to some respect. No information has been provided yet to share. The consultants are working on that and once it is available, I am sure everyone will need to have a chance to look at it.

As mentioned previously, we have secured grants relative to the Mentor Marsh. They will be spraying 265 acres in the Marsh, including 60 acres in the City. This is a start of a campaign that will go on for years. Museums also got new funds for strategic property acquisition for sites just to continue this program. We worked with Chagrin River Watershed Partners to secure water management infrastructure projects at the trailhead and parking lot. We are relying on their expertise to help us get this done right.

We have a couple studies that are focused just on the lakefront Preserve and the Marina. There is no real clarity about these because one part of the study has not been released yet. It has just arrived and Council has not had a chance to look at it. Once a decision is made between the Council and Administration, it will have to go to a public vote. We need clarity there because we lost about six acres of our Preserve to erosion and expect that number to grow. We will be investing \$600,000 to build a revetment to address 500 linear feet of the 4600 linear feet of coastline that is affected. What happens there also affects the channel and there is no clarity there either. They only have bits and pieces of the answer.

Mr. Landeg suggested this be given to Mr. Boyd as a request for a brick and mortar project. This section has to be done because there is a potential for the breach of the Lagoons. There could be a request from the State that shows a local shared commitment in asking for brick and mortar for the State Park part of that.

Mr. Bruckman said the big question for them is that looming behind all these smaller grants for marsh restoration are very important property acquisitions. There are two concurrent determinations of Federal interest out there. One is for the harbor channel and one is for the Marsh itself. Each of those could lead to large sums of Federal funds to help us resolve our respective challenges, but we are still applying behind those. Application precedes the funds for implementation and erosion may outstrip our ability to get to that point. That is a big source of concern. There is no immediate answer and it is a big challenge. There is no definite timeline.

Mr. Allen questioned how many of the Marina guests are non-Mentor residents and Mr. Bruckman responded saying that it was about half. Mr. Allen stated the Lagoons and the Marsh are really regional.

He felt the next step should not just be left up to Mentor by itself. How does the City step out and invite others in the region and County to help?

Mr. Bruckman said if you look at the Western Basin and the Greater Sandusky Maritime business that goes all the way east to Erie, central Lake County is about the mid-point between them. We could be a nice destination if we had the draw to bring people back and forth.

Mr. Landeg said the Lagoons Committee was open to that but did not know what they were going to do. Half the boaters are not residents. They see huge infrastructure costs on the horizon and are wrestling with the fact that very few (205) Mentor residents are using it. That is a pretty small number of our citizens using the docks. There were a lot more Mentor residents coming to the Preserve. Ms. Pohl said there are quite a lot coming from outside the Lake County area.

Mr. Boyd added that one of the difficult conversations that we continue to try to have is more collaboration between the cities and the County Port Authority as far as working together. Mentor and Fairport have Ports and trying to expand that relationship continues. The Fairport Port Authority kind of handed this section of the coastal initiatives to the County Port so they could focus on it. He thought this was a desirable ending that we should work towards.

Perry Township – Mark Welch - The beach is still there. There is still a question as to what to do with the house. As far as the capital projects, it is probably prudent to just go ahead and think about phase three. We have protected the hillside and protected the shore.

Mr. Boyd asked if they were talking about expanding the capabilities of the boat launch in that area. Mr. Welch said that was one potential area and the walk trail is another one. We could possibly start on that. He said he would bring it to their attention.

Mentor-on-the-lake - Al Buescher – There was nothing to be brought up about Mentor-on-the-Lake that has not already been mentioned by Mr. Stephenson and the Mentor Harbor.

North Perry Village Resident – Harry Allen– He had nothing to add.

Mentor Harbor Yacht Club – Mr. Stephenson – They had been monitoring the sand movement from west to east for 15 years in great detail. For the past fifteen years we have had 15,000 cubic yards of sand coming from the west to the east. For the past three years, we have only had 5,000 cubic yards. When we had 15,000, we put it on the east beach and before the year was over, it was gone. Now 5,000 cubic yards are put there and 15,000 still goes away. They are netting 10,000 every year for three years so they are down 30,000 cubic yards just in property. Those east of them have been noticing the shore line being cut back anywhere between 20 to 60 feet a year. They have the same erosion problem that Mentor has east of the channel walls. The channel walls are stabilizing the sand to the west. There are multiple theories of why this is happening, but there was a very noticeable and measureable change three years ago. Stone revetment has been put in to protect structures and they will probably need to put in more. They are glad Mentor is going to put in their stone revetment because that will give them something to tie into. With the discussion of the Capital Budget, this is shovel-ready and improvements to the channel walls could be done for any number between \$100,000 and \$2 million. The inside of the steel walls needs to be lined with armorstone. This was reason for transferring that property to the Lake County Port.

Mr. Landeg asked how that would affect the Federal process? Mr. Stephenson said this would be consistent with what the Federal Government would already do. In reality, it would take three years to do a study and five years to get funded. Eight years from now might be too late.

Lake County Commissions/Lake County Development Corp. – Dave Gilmer – The annual Lake County Development Council Economic Forum will be held on October 14, 2015. The speaker will be an economist from a Cleveland firm. It is being held in the morning at LaMalfa in Mentor. Contact Mr. Gilmer for details. This year, they are bringing students in with sponsors and may have 150 students; 21 of these students are from Fairport Harbor.

Chagrin River Watershed Partners – Heather Elmer - In regard to the grant that the City of Mentor received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last summer, they had a special funding opportunity through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. They targeted coastal cities of a particular population size in the Great Lakes. The City of Mentor applied for that funded opportunity and that will be distributed to implement renewed construction projects treating and reducing stormwater runoff in the communities. That project will involve the design and installation of permeable pavement at the Mentor Marsh Marina parking area as well as bioretention cells. These will help to treat and infiltrate stormwater from the parking lot itself and the surrounding areas as well as the new runoff from the boat storage facility there. There are some education components to this project. This project is just getting off the ground now.

Other updates in terms with CRWP's work with Lake County communities were furnishing Painesville Township and Madison Township with some Ohio E.P.A. retrofit surface improvements projects, which are also stormwater retrofit projects at Township facilities. These projects are in their early stages. This summer, they worked with the City of Mentor and the Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District to implement a large-scale stormwater green infrastructure project at the Great Lakes Mall. This consisted of underground infiltration chambers, permeable pavement and a series of rain gardens that will help to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff from the Mall property as well as to improve water quality going into Newell Creek. That was the last part of a Great Lakes Restoration Project that was awarded many years before she came onboard last fall. The project and the closing of the E.P.A. grant will be completed by the end of this month. They still have the installation of a small interpretive sign.

Lake County Port Coastal Manager – Peter Zahirsky – He had no further comments.

Mr. Allen commented on the phosphorous rise in the Lake Erie water level saying that we are probably contributing to the water getting to the Lakes more quickly. This is even a conundrum for the Corps. These algae blooms are not just in Lake Erie. We need to get the scientific community to attack it.

Mr. Boyd concluded that community capital projects should be emailed to either Mr. Zahirsky or him over the next month so a list can be compiled and some talking points pulled together. We did bring home \$1.25 million from the 2009 Capital Budget. There is no match on these dollars.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Reichard moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Buescher seconded the motion.

All voted "Aye".

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.